



Triplicates to be Replaced with Tamper-Resistant Prescription Forms

The triplicate prescription form required to prescribe Schedule II medications is being replaced. Effective July 1, 2004, a new form may be used to prescribe Schedule II medications, although triplicate forms can still be used for six more months.

On January 1, 2005, all written controlled substance prescriptions (for Schedules II-V) must be on the new, tamper-resistant prescription form. Phone and fax orders for Schedules III-V medications will still be permitted. Fax orders should not be on the tamper-resistant forms (use of the new forms will result in a voided prescription) but on an ordinary prescription form. If the tamper-resistant form is used for a fax prescription resulting in a “voided” prescription, the pharmacy will have to contact the prescriber to ensure the prescription’s authenticity.

The tamper-resistant form will be available from private printers who must be approved by both the Board of Pharmacy and the Department of Justice. Prescribers can obtain these forms from any approved security printer in any quantity or format they desire.

The new forms must have a number of different security features:

- Void protection to prevent duplication or chemical washing to alter prescriptions;
- Watermark on the backside of the prescription with the text “California Security Prescription;”
- Thermo-chromic ink that changes color when exposed to heat;
- A description of the security features printed on each prescription form;
- Quantity check-off boxes; and
- The preprinted name, category of licensure, license number, and federal controlled substance registration number of the prescribing practitioner.

The pharmacy-generated triplicate for patients in skilled nursing, intermediate care, and hospice settings is also being replaced. Beginning July 1, 2005, pharmacies may replace the pharmacy-generated triplicate with a form of their own design. In addition, pharmacies may now take oral and electronic Schedule II orders for patients in any home health care setting and patients served by a licensed hospice.

Hospitals and other licensed health facilities will use a variation of the tamper-resistant forms that does not require the prescriber’s information (name, license number, etc.) to be preprinted on the form. Instead, these “institutional forms” require the prescriber to write, print or stamp that information on the form before it is a valid prescription.